

Appl. No. 09/819,168
Amdt. dated September 2, 2004
Reply to Office action of March 2, 2004

In the Claims:

Claims 1, 14, 45 and 49 are amended herein. The remaining claims are not amended in this response. Non-elected claims 9-13, 19-44 and 50 are canceled.

1. (currently amended) A game machine, comprising:
movement instructing unit for instructing the movement of a player character in a three-dimensional virtual space;
space setting unit for setting the shapes of said player character and an object existing around the player character and their arrangement in said virtual space;
image generating unit for generating an image in said virtual space as looked from a virtual visual point position;
timing decision unit for deciding the timing at which said player character and said object satisfy relatively a predetermined relation for at least one of the shape shapes and the arrangement in said virtual space;
a timer for measuring a fixed time after said timing decision unit decides that said player character and said object satisfy the predetermined relation; and
visual point position setting unit for shifting said visual point position along with the movement of said player character so that said player character may be contained in a visual field range, and changing said visual point position in a predetermined

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range almost centered at said player character, when the elapse of said fixed time is detected by said timer.

2. (original) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein said timing decision unit decides the timing at which said player character is intercepted in the visual field by said object, as looked from said visual point position in a direction toward said player character, on the basis of the shapes of said player character and said object and their arrangement in said virtual space.

3. (original) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein said timing decision unit decides the timing at which said object is contained in a predetermined range around said player character.

4. (original) The game machine according to claim 3, wherein said visual point position is set above the height of said player character, and said timing decision unit decides the timing for said object above the height of said player character.

5. (original) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein said visual point position setting unit changes said visual point position by rotating said visual point position by a predetermined angle around a rotational center of said player character position.

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6. (original) The game machine according to claim 5, wherein said image generating unit generates said image continuously while said visual point position is being rotated by said visual point position setting unit.

7. (original) The game machine according to claim 5, wherein said visual point position setting unit continues an operation of rotating said visual point position, until said player character is kept from being intercepted by said object as looked from said visual point position.

8. (original) The game machine according to claim 1, further comprising return instructing unit for making a return instruction of returning the changed visual point position to an original state, when said visual point position is changed, wherein said visual point position setting unit returns said changed visual point position to the original state, when the return instruction is made by said return instructing unit.

9-13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) A game machine, comprising:
movement instruction unit instructing the movement of a player character in a three-dimensional virtual space;
space setting unit for setting the shapes of said player character and an object existing around the player character, and their arrangement in said virtual space;

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image generating unit for generating an image in said virtual space as seen from a virtual visual point Position; change instructing unit for instructing the change of said visual point position; and

visual point position setting unit for shifting said visual point position set in said virtual space, along with the movement of said player character, so that said player character may be contained in a visual field range, and changing said visual point position in a predetermined range almost centered at said player character, when a change instruction is made by said change instructing unit after a predetermined duration being greater than zero.

15. (original) The game machine according to claim 14, wherein said visual point position setting unit changes said visual point position by rotating said visual point position by a predetermined angle around a rotational center of said player character position.

16. (original) The game machine according to claim 15, wherein said image generating unit generates said image continuously while said visual point position is being rotated by said visual point position setting unit.

17. (original) The game machine according to claim 15, wherein said visual point position setting unit continues an

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operation of rotating said visual point position, until said player character is kept from being intercepted by said object as looked from said visual point position.

18. (original) The game machine according to claim 14, further comprising return instructing unit for making a return instruction of returning the changed visual point position to an original state, when said visual point position is changed, wherein said visual point position setting unit returns said changed visual point position to the original state, when the return instruction is made by said return instructing unit.

19-44. (canceled)

45. (currently amended) A game machine, comprising:
movement instructing unit for instructing the movement of a player character in a three-dimensional virtual space;
space setting unit for setting the shapes of said player character and an object existing around the player character, and their arrangement in said virtual space;
image generating unit for generating an image in said virtual space as seen from a virtual visual point position;
timing decision unit for deciding the timing at which said player character and said object satisfy relatively a predetermined relation for at least one of the shape shapes and the arrangement in said virtual space;

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return instructing unit for making a return instruction of returning the changed degree of transparency for the object to an original state, when the degree of transparency for said object is changed;

visual point position setting unit for shifting said visual point position, along with the movement of said player character, so that said player character may be contained in a visual field range; and

transmission processing unit for performing a transmission process of changing the degree of transparency for the object placed between said player character and said visual point position, when said timing decision unit decides that said player character and said object satisfy the predetermined relation and after the elapse of a time greater than zero, as well as returning the changed degree of transparency to the original state, when a return instruction is issued by said return instructing unit.

46. (original) The game machine according to claim 45, wherein said timing decision unit decides the timing at which said player character is intercepted in the visual field by said object, as looked from said visual point position in a direction toward said player character, on the basis of the shapes of said player character and said object and their arrangement in said virtual space.

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47. (original) The game machine according to claim 45, wherein said timing decision unit decides the timing at which said object is contained in a predetermined range around said player character.

48. (original) The game machine according to claim 47, wherein said visual point position is set above the height of said player character, and said timing decision unit decides the timing for said object above the height of said player character.

49. (currently amended) An information storage medium storing a program for enabling a computer to execute a process of deciding a timing at which player character and an object existing around the player character satisfy relatively a predetermined relation for at least one of ~~the~~ a shape and ~~the~~ an arrangement in a virtual space, and changing the visual point position in a predetermined range almost centered at said player character after the elapse of a fixed time wherein said fixed time is more than zero.

50. (canceled)